



# GREATER SEATTLE DISASTERS AND YOU

## What You Need to Know

Seattle Project Impact is a public-private partnership with a purpose to make Seattle a disaster resistant community and to share successful programs throughout the nation. Project Impact's proactive programs like Home Retrofit, School Retrofit, Hazard Mapping, and Disaster Resistant Businesses have identified areas of need in our community and applied resources available to all residents.

### What natural disasters are we vulnerable to in Seattle?

Earth scientists and engineers now understand that *earthquake* hazards in the Seattle area are greater than previously known. In addition to deep earthquakes like those in 1949, 1965 and 2001, in the early 1990s scientists and engineers accepted the geologic evidence that great subduction zone earthquakes, of magnitude 8 to 9, repeatedly strike along the Washington coast. In 1992, geologists found evidence that a large earthquake occurred on the Seattle fault about 1,000 years ago. It shows that this region is susceptible to all three types of quakes.



*Landslides* have hit Seattle hard during the past several years. The City's hilly topography, steep slopes, local geology, and above-normal rainfall have combined to send slopes sliding in many areas of the city. The costs of these landslides, in terms of human suffering, property damage, business losses, and recovery costs have exceeded tens of millions of dollars.



### How can Seattle Project Impact minimize the effects of a disaster?

Through our different public events, in-depth website and materials, we create an opportunity for you to learn about our region's natural hazard risks, and what available resources can assist you to lessen their impact. Pooling the knowledge and talents of its many partners - *government agencies, large and small businesses, educators, scientists, neighborhood organizations, and dedicated volunteers* - Seattle Project Impact has a number of successful programs underway. They are:

- **Home Retrofit.** *Goal: to help homeowners strengthen property that's susceptible to structural damage from earthquakes.*
- **School Retrofit.** *Goal: to remove nonstructural and classroom hazards from public schools to keep kids safe.*
- **Hazard Mapping.** *Goal: to study geologic hazards and produce better landslide and earthquake hazard maps for public education and to use in developing sound land use policy.*
- **Disaster Resistant Businesses.** *Goal: to educate businesses about their disaster exposure, how to minimize their potential for economic loss, and how to maximize their ability to remain operational.*

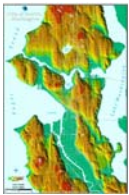
## What are the specifics of these programs and how can they assist you?



- **Home Retrofit.** The Home Retrofit program has several components. They include: an expedited building permit process that establishes generic retrofit solutions for older, wood frame homes; professional training for builders and contractors about the new standards and permit procedures; homeowner classes, tool libraries and technical assistance for homeowners interested in doing their own retrofit; and consumer information for homeowners who will hire one of the trained contractors. Home Retrofit grants and loans are also available for low-to-moderate income Seattle homeowners. Many other jurisdictions have launched this program, now called **Regional Home Retrofit**, to strengthen their communities' homes against earthquakes. Over 250,000 homes regionally may need retrofitting.



- **School Retrofit.** The School Retrofit program's three focus areas are overhead hazard removal (like flush tanks and radiators), nonstructural retrofit (classroom shelves, TVs, etc.), and automatic gas shut-off valves. Seattle Public Schools leads this effort and the *Nonstructural Protection Guide* is the cornerstone of self-sustaining training for school maintenance workers and volunteers to identify and secure items, which pose a hazard to students. An education campaign involves students in creating options for a more earthquake safe community.



- **Hazard Mapping.** Earthquake and landslide hazards are the focus of maps being developed. Landslide maps are being produced that integrate existing slide records with data about historical rainfall and the soil properties of Seattle's landslide-prone areas. For earthquakes, a three-dimensional geologic map of the Puget Sound Area is being produced that incorporates complex relations beneath the surface with data of a quake's ground motion. The mapping will help area residents understand more about the risks they face and aid in the development of sound land use policies.



- **Disaster Resistant Businesses.** Businesses are an important part of the community in which they reside. Seattle's Disaster Resistant Businesses program is an effort combining subject experts and business people with step-by-step materials and resources. The idea is to simplify the process for any business to reduce the impact of disasters and keep their doors open. The DRB Toolkit and Business Emergency Network (BEN), two-way communication system, assist this.

## Why would this information be important to you?

Living in the Pacific Northwest it is important to know what we are doing to assist you and our residents from harm during an earthquake. Whether you rent or own, have children in school, or have a family member who owns a small business, there are actions that can be taken BEFORE a disaster strikes to protect you, your family, and property from the damaging effects of a disaster.

## How do you find out more?

For additional information you can visit the Seattle Project Impact website at [www.seattle.gov/projectimpact](http://www.seattle.gov/projectimpact). For more information, please contact the Director Inés Pearce at (206) 615-0288 or [ines.pearce@seattle.gov](mailto:ines.pearce@seattle.gov)